

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Two More Earns VeriFlora Certification

Jennifer Zurko

Olson's Greenhouse in Salem, Utah, and Rancho Tissue Technologies in Rancho Santa Fe, California, are the newest floriculture businesses to be certified under the VeriFlora Certified Sustainably Grown eco-label. VeriFlora certification signifies that they practice sustainable and eco-friendly methods in production, shipping and labor management.

Certification by VeriFlora means that products grown are independently certified as being produced in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. It also identifies that the company enlists quality, employee-friendly management practices that meet and exceed pre-determined standards of excellence.

In order to obtain certification, a grower must meet or exceed environmental protection requirements covering issues in the areas of pest management, media fertility, production yields, energy efficiency, carbon footprint, waste management, water conservation and ecosystem care.

Bart Olson, president of Olson's Greenhouse, describes the company's commitment to sustainability, "As we started working with VeriFlora, we could see that many of the things we were doing as a company were already in-line with the VeriFlora certification program. With VeriFlora's help, we were able to identify additional areas where improvement would be beneficial. The certification process has not only helped Olson's Greenhouse in its quest for sustainability, it has made us an all-around better company."

Rancho Tissue Technologies has received VeriFlora's Sustainably Grown Certification for both its Stage III microcuttings and Stage IV liners.

"More than a seal of approval, VeriFlora represents the true depth of Rancho Tissue Technologies' commitment to producing the finest quality tissue culture plants while maintaining the safety and health of our employees and the environment," says Heather May, founder and owner. "For example, we choose plants to tissue culture that are hardier and more resistant to normal diseases, thus requiring less water and fewer chemical applications."

Rancho Tissue Technologies' extensive sustainability efforts include selecting plants that require less water and fewer chemicals; recycling and reusing all lab vessels plants are grown in; installing new growth chamber lighting to reduce energy usage and costs by at least 25%; and weekly employee health, safety and quality

training meetings. **GT**